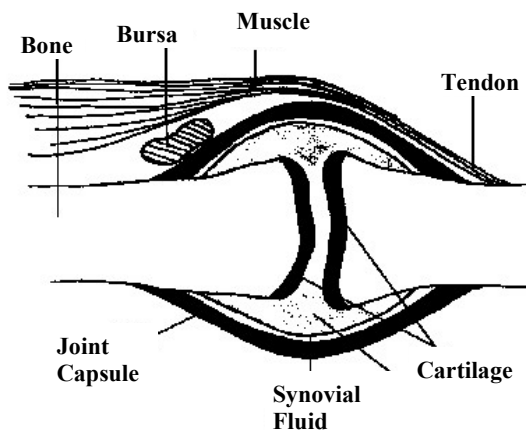


Bursitis

What is bursitis?

Bursitis is inflammation of a bursa. A bursa is a fluid-filled sac that surrounds joints or tendons. A bursa reduces friction by cushioning muscles or tendons and bones that move back and forth across each other. The elbow, hip, knee, shoulder, and other joints contain a cushioning bursa.

Normal Joint



How does it occur?

Irritation, injury, or pressure to a bursa can cause inflammation, resulting in swelling and pain.

Causes of bursitis include:

Injury of a joint from sports activities, such as baseball, tennis, racquetball, and running, can cause the disorder.

Frequent irritation or friction on a body part from other activities, including everyday household jobs such as yard work, shoveling dirt or snow, and house painting, can cause bursitis.

Prepatellar bursitis, which is also called housemaid's knee, results from kneeling on a hard or raised surface for long periods.

Olecranon bursitis, nicknamed student's elbow, results from repeated pressure on the point of the elbow. It often occurs when someone leans on a table or desk for a long time.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of bursitis usually include swelling, redness, and pain in the affected area, which is normally near a joint.

How is it diagnosed?

Your doctor will examine you to determine if you have bursitis or another condition. He or she may use a needle and syringe to get a sample of fluid from the bursa to rule out infections and to find the cause of the bursitis. To gain more information, your doctor may ask you to have x-rays and blood tests.



How is it treated?

To relieve symptoms of bursitis, your doctor will recommend these guidelines:

Rest the affected area, such as the shoulder, elbow, knee, or hip.

Do not put any pressure on the sore and swollen area until the swelling subsides.

Put an ice pack on the area for 20 to 30 minutes three or four times a day to help relieve pain.

Maintain your range of motion by moving the joint to help keep the joint from getting stiff.

Gradually build strength in the area with gentle exercise.

Wait 3 to 6 weeks before returning to the sport or task that originally caused your condition.

Your doctor may also prescribe an anti-inflammatory drug.



If symptoms still persist:

Your doctor may remove excess fluid from the swollen area with a needle and syringe. The doctor may then wrap the injured site or splint it to keep the

liquid from refilling the area and to prevent you from moving it.

Your doctor may inject the inflamed area with a steroid drug, usually cortisone, and a local anesthetic to reduce swelling, redness, and pain.

Your doctor may recommend surgery to take out the bursa if your condition continues to be troublesome despite treatment.



How long will the effects last?

With treatment, the pain and swelling of bursitis usually clear up within 1 or 2 weeks.

How can I take care of myself?

Follow the course of treatment your doctor prescribes.

When should I call the doctor?

In bursitis, the bursa is inflamed but not infected. If the swelling spreads despite treatment or if you develop fever, chills, or increased warmth, you should see a doctor immediately. These are signs of possible infection.

How can I help prevent bursitis?

There are no specific steps you can take to prevent bursitis from occurring again. You may choose not to do the activity that caused the bursitis originally or try not to overuse or reinjure the affected area.

Avoid pressure and injury to the joint by wearing a protective pad.

Developed by McKesson Clinical Reference Systems.

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